

Monday Nitro – September 6, 1999: WCW's Surrender

Monday Nitro #204

Date: September 6, 1999

Location: Miami Arena, Miami, Florida

Attendance: 8,623

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Tony Schiavone

It's one of those rare weeks where WCW has given us the slightest glimmer of hope coming off this past week's Thunder. They actually let Saturn escape with his life against Sid and the Revolution got to stand tall to end the show. We're coming up on Fall Brawl this Sunday though, and that means it's time to crush the hopes and dreams of fans so the main event talent can carry the day again. Let's get to it.

Clips from last week.

Opening sequence.

With new music, here's Bret Hart in his medium return to WCW. He thought it was a good idea to come down to Miami and show up back here after a lot of time off to think. After all that time, it occurs to him that he hasn't accomplished his goal of making a difference here in WCW. This isn't about titles, but he wants to face Hogan. Even if the title isn't on the line, he can't move forward with his career until he gets that one match. That's quite the random challenge without much of a reason. Glad to see Bret is fitting right in.

Here are Riki Rachman and Kimberly for the first round of the Nitro Girl search. There are two finalists and the fans get to vote on WCW.com. Kimberly wraps it up by telling us how hard it is to be a Nitro Girl. I'm sure it is. The saving grace of this segment: Rachman to the crowd: "SAY OH YEAH!" Crowd: "NO!" When WCW's fans reject you, get out while you can.

Lodi vs. Evan Karagias

Just a matter of killing times until the Clowns and Vampiro show up. Lenny offers an early distraction so Lodi can throw Evan outside. Back in and Evan hits a quick dropkick for two, followed by a Sky High for the same. The champ tries another distraction but this time gets send running back to the floor.

A powerslam and neckbreaker get two each on Lodi and Evan dives onto Lane before he can get on the apron again. They start brawling and it's nice to see Lenny actually fight for a change and show a backbone. Lodi accidentally dives on his brother and here come the Clowns for a distraction, allowing Lodi to grab a quick DDT for the pin.

Rating: D. My goodness this company is falling fast. It's nice to see the backbone of the company getting bigger stories, but we're opening shows with a guy famous for carrying signs vs. the pretty boy of the week. How is this supposed to make me want to keep watching? A mostly dull and short match with Lodi winning isn't exactly the most thrilling thing in the world.

DJ Ran y Las Chicas Nitro.

Here's Hogan with something to say. Thankfully he keeps it short here, saying he has no idea why Savage and George were in his locker room or what Luger's agenda is. He even clarifies that he has a black Hummer instead of the white one in the picture. I still can't believe that was a plot point they had to address. Hogan can't wait for his six man cage match with Sting and Goldberg against Page/Sid/Steiner. You would think that match would be mentioned earlier in the night but WCW wants to keep us guessing you see.

Barry Horowitz vs. Al Greene

If Sid doesn't come out during this.....It's a very bad sign when a match doesn't seem good enough for a taped Thunder but that's what we've got here. Feeling out process to start with Barry raking his eyes because if there's anyone you can buy as a heel, it's Barry Horowitz. An armdrag and dropkick put Greene down and Barry chokes him on the ropes. For another match that should have been announced earlier, Tony promises a battle royal with the final two men having a regular match for a World Title

match next week.

Suddenly we have piano music playing and cut to a man with bleached blond hair playing the piano being lowered from the ceiling. That would be the Maestro, who we'll get to know more in the future. As this is going on, Sid comes out and powerbombs both guys for the no contest. Tony declares him 77-0, despite that being his record at the start of Thunder. I would say this is a big rib, but I don't think WCW has the intelligence to pull that off. However, I can give it to WCW to have Sid, Tony screwing up, a piano being lowered from the ceiling and the debut of a new guy in a Barry Horowitz (as a heel for some reason) match.

Sid promises to break Goldberg's record. I think we've gotten the point by now.

The West Texas Rednecks are getting ready for the battle royal without Duncum, who will be out two to three months. The door swings open and there's a cowboy silhouette, complete with tons of smoke. Instead of someone interesting, it's Vincent, now dressed like a cowboy, offering the Rednecks his help. Since the Rednecks aren't that bright, they take him up on his offer. Curt's nickname for him: Curly Bill. Sure why not.

Here's Harlem Heat with something to say. Gene asks them about their title match on Sunday and Booker says he's here to turn this mother out. He knocks the microphone out of Gene's hand and just takes it from him next time. As usual, Gene really doesn't have a reason to be here. Stevie says they will be the nine time, nine time, nine time, nine time, nine time, nine time, nine time Tag Team Champions. Now Booker wants to burn this mother up but we're out of time.

Luger and Sting go into a locker room to find Bret and Hogan. Sting wants to talk to Hogan, who agrees....and there go the lights. Sound effects ensue and we come back with Sting out cold. Luger and Hogan blame each other for doing it. Didn't we see this same storyline with the roles reversed back in the early days of Nitro? As in with the same exact people?

There's more to that battle royal than announced earlier. There are twelve people in the battle royal and the first four will be eliminated.

The next six out will face each other in singles matches later tonight, and the final two will have another singles match with the winners facing each other for a title shot next week. Those first three singles matches don't seem to be for anything other than a way to torment us. Thankfully WCW has a graphic for this because the idea of Tony or Bobby remembering this would have been a disaster.

Battle Royal

First Family, Revolution, West Texas Rednecks

Battlebowl 1996 might have had a better lineup than this. Somehow they can't even promote a match like this properly as Hennig stays on the floor, making it an eleven man battle royal, in theory meaning the first three are officially eliminated. Everyone brawls to start with Saturn choking Barbarian before moving over to Barry. The First Family seems to have the most continuity as the Revolution is on the other end with everyone fighting for themselves.

Shane backdrops Knobbs out and Benoit dumps Bill. Barbarian goes up top like the lunkheaded savage he is and gets dropkicked out, leaving us with eight. Benoit and Saturn chop on Morrus in the corner as Hennig keeps walking around on the floor. Shane backdrops Kendall out but Kendall grabs Douglas from the floor and pulls him out as well. I'm assuming that's a match later. Benoit throws Barry out and Saturn dumps Flynn, leaving us with Morrus, Saturn, Benoit and Malenko. Morrus gorilla presses Saturn out, only to walk into a double clothesline to give us Malenko vs. Benoit for the title shot later tonight.

Rating: D. Gah we're in for a very, very long night with what could be a great match to cap it off. This was a really boring battle royal with a bunch of low level guys and the US Champion and pals in there to take over near the end. I'm not sure why I would want to see Kendall Windham vs. Shane Douglas, Jerry Flynn vs. Barry Windham or Hugh Morrus vs. Perry Saturn (ok that could be decent) but if WCW can waste our time with stuff like this, why not?

Ad for Cat-Bo, a parody of Tae-Bo. See, this is the kind of stuff that can actually be entertaining, though it only kind of accomplishes the

goal. The problem here is that it's only kind of funny and comes off more like a really badly made serious version of what they're making fun of. I mean, it's a bunch of out of shape people moving around and exercising with a professional athlete leading them. That's not really funny and is pretty much exactly the point of Tae-Bo in the first place. In other words, WCW had something resembling an idea but managed to screw it up.

Johnny Swinger vs. Prince Iaukea

Is the main roster on vacation or something? Swinger hides in the ropes to start and takes a shoulder to put him down. Prince hammers away in the corner and backflips over Swinger into a rollup for two. My goodness why is this not a dark match? Johnny hammers away in the corner as Tony brags about the huge audiences watching the show. There's actually something to that as Nitro was within very close striking distance of Raw for a few weeks around this time. Granted by next week they lost by two points but they were there at this point.

Swinger hammers away even more because he doesn't know how to do much besides punch. The fans again want Sid but instead get Iaukea missing a dropkick before making his comeback. Cue Vampiro and the Clowns again with Violent J. tripping Swinger, allowing Vampiro to give him the Nail in the Coffin so Iaukea can get the easy pin.

Rating: F. I mean....dang man. They really are pulling out all of the horrible ideas here to make sure no one wants to keep watching this show. Yeah they tried to push something here with the Clowns recruiting people, but who in their right mind would recruit Prince Iaukea? This is clearly another episode where they're not trying and expect the fans to just suffer through whatever they're given and stick around for the main event stuff, despite that plan not working in about a year and a half.

Earlier today, Buff Bagwell was signing autographs when Berlyn came up and spoke German. Bagwell doesn't take kindly to someone speaking anything other than AMERICAN and goes after him to no avail.

Berlyn video.

Steve Regal vs. Buff Bagwell

Buff starts a USA chant to keep up his xenophobic run. Feeling out process to start as they trade arm control with Regal clearly not going at full speed. A backdrop and clothesline put Regal on the floor, allowing Buff to do some high quality posing. Back in and Buff wins a slugout until Regal drives a knee into the ribs. Dave Taylor loads up the flag shot despite his buddy being in control, only to hit Regal by mistake, which sets up the Blockbuster for the fast pin. So our American hero got beaten up for most of the match and won due to some failed cheating. USA indeed.

Post match Buff grabs the mic and says he loves Miami because it's part of America. This Sunday, Berlyn will be fighting all of the USA. This would be somewhere around Booking 101.

Juventud Guerrera/Psychosis/Blitzkrieg vs. Kidman/Chavo Guerrero Jr./Eddie Guerrero

It's a huge brawl to start as this is already moving fast. Juvy and Eddie are left alone in the ring with Eddie taking a powerbomb before it's off to Psychosis to start some triple teaming. Psychosis crotches Eddie on top and just lets him drop down. That's a different method of operation instead of like, doing something interesting. Psychosis hits a top rope spinwheel kick (not a plancha Tony) and another triple stomp ensues.

Eddie finally gets a break by grabbing Psychosis' hands and climbing the ropes into a headscissors takeover to Juvy while wristdragging Psychosis. Guerrero could hit that move like no one I've ever seen. He tags both partners and everything breaks down Kidman dropping a guillotine legdrop on Blitzkrieg but it's off to Juvy for a bulldog out of the corner. He catches Kidman on his shoulders, allowing Psychosis to come in off the top with a missile dropkick for a big crash.

Off to Blitzkrieg for his overly flippy elbow drop before it's already back to Juvy. Kidman nails the BK Bomb but here are the freaking Clowns again. Everything breaks down again and Juvy pulls Chavo to the floor, only to have Blitzkrieg hit his partner with a dive by mistake. Back inside, Psychosis can't powerbomb Kidman (he's no Lenny Lane), setting up the Frog Splash for the pin.

Rating: C. Either do something with the Clowns or stop having them come out so many times a show. They just stand there and then try to recruit some low level cruiserweight to set up whatever big recruitment story they have which isn't going to make the Clowns any better in the ring. Or interesting for that matter.

Shane Douglas vs. Kendall Windham

Please make it quick. Shane asks the fans if they want a revolution. Kendall doesn't seem to want one as he elbows Shane in the face, only to eat a gordbuster. The necksnap gets two and they head to the floor with Windham taking over. Shane is sent into the barricade and steps before taking him back inside for a legdrop for two. Kendall takes a quick atomic drop and Shane weakly punches him in the corner.

Here's Curt Hennig to nail Shane in the back as we cut to a split screen to show the Revolution in the back. They don't bother coming out or anything, so Harlem Heat comes out and jumps Hennig. Stevie completely misses a slap jack shot to Kendall, setting up Shane's Pittsburgh Plunge for the pin, even though all four shoulders were down.

Rating: F. It was boring, it was sloppy, it had three people running in and there was no reason for these two to be fighting other than they were both in a battle royal earlier in the night. I'm not sure what the idea was behind the battle royal setting up matches but it feels like they have no idea what else to do.

WCW is giving away a million dollars next week. Given how much money they've given away over the years with bad booking, that might be a financial improvement.

Jerry Flynn vs. Barry Windham

Flynn takes him into the corner for a bunch of kicks and punches as he's doubled his offensive repertoire. More kicks and chops have Barry looking annoyed so he rakes Jerry's eyes across the top rope. Jerry kicks him even more until Jimmy Hart trips Barry, causing Curly Billy to go after Hart. The distraction sends Jerry after Bill, who blasts him in the head with a title belt. Barry hits a quick DDT for the pin. Thank goodness

this wasn't three minutes long as I don't think I could come up with a low enough rating.

Clips of Berlyn debuting last week.

Gene brings out Berlyn and gets frisked by one of the security guards. Berlyn's Lana says every stupid cliché you could imagine about how great Germany is and promises to show America that Germany is just better. Thankfully they kept this short.

Nitro Girls.

Hugh Morrus vs. Perry Saturn

This has to be better right? Morrus hammers away to start and counters a sunset flip, only to miss his sitdown splash. Saturn sends him out to the floor for a breather before punching Morrus instead of accepting a test of strength. Somehow this is already more interesting than what we've seen so far tonight.

Back up and Morrus stomps and chokes in the corner but gets pushed into the buckle and punched even more. Even more forearms and punches have Saturn in trouble but he kicks back from the mat. That's it for his offense for now though as a clothesline sets up a chinlock. This match is dying.

Back up and Saturn hammers away, only to have Morrus bite his face. A gorilla press sets up a top rope splash but Saturn rolls away. Some suplexes have Morrus reeling but Jimmy Hart breaks up a Death Valley Driver attempt. The distraction lets Morrus nail Saturn in the back, only to have him miss No Laughing Matter. The Rings of Saturn finally end this.

Rating: D-. Just end this show already I beg of you. This was by far the best match of the three battle royal fallout matches so far and it's only because Morrus is the least horrible of the heels involved. What does this prove? That Morrus can beat up Saturn for ten minutes until Saturn hits a quick move for the win? It didn't work for Randy Savage back in 1995 and it doesn't make me want to see Saturn fight for the TV Title on

Sunday.

Road Report.

Chris Benoit vs. Dean Malenko

Non-title but the winner gets a World Title shot next week. They shake hands hard to start before Benoit takes him down to the mat. Dean does the exact same thing before nailing a shoulder to get us to a standoff. A test of strength goes to Malenko but Benoit monkey flips him for two, setting off a sweet pinfall reversal sequence for several near falls each. Benoit is sent to the apron but gets pulled back inside almost immediately.

Things start getting more intense as Benoit chops away and sends Dean into the buckle. It turns into a slugout with Benoit getting the better of it before we hit a quick chinlock. Thankfully that goes nowhere and they fight over a tombstone with Chris planting Malenko...as Sid comes out. Benoit misses the Swan Dive, drawing in Sid to powerbomb Malenko and talk trash, giving us a no contest, which should have been a DQ win for Benoit but WCW doesn't understand how wrestling works. So yes, the ENTIRE BATTLE ROYAL and all those boring matches mean NOTHING.

Rating: D+. I should have known. I mean I really should have known. You knew WCW wasn't going to give Benoit or Malenko a crack at the top spot in the company because that would be elevating one of these guys, when it's clear they only exist to make people like Sid look good. The match was getting good until the end, which crippled it more than jumping off the top rope did for Sid.

Video on Hogan vs. Sting.

Video on Page vs. Goldberg.

The cage is lowered, complete with a top on it.

Goldberg/Hulk Hogan/Sting vs. Sid Vicious/Rick Steiner/Diamond Dallas Page

Steiner still doesn't have the TV Title with him, though to be fair,

Hogan doesn't have his belt either. Hogan comes out first and the fight starts 3-1 with the World Champ in trouble. Goldberg is nice enough to go through his full entrance as his partner gets triple teamed. Apparently Bigelow and Kanyon aren't pleased with Goldberg's laziness and jump him outside the cage as we're waiting on Sting. Bigelow and Kanyon show their stupidity by throwing Goldberg inside the cage and he immediately starts his comeback. He fights out of a Diamond Cutter attempt and powerslams Page before clotheslining the other two down.

Hogan gets back up and the villains are beaten up even worse. The trio starts fighting back as Sting and Luger come out with Lex telling Sting not to go in. Sting doesn't listen to Luger (would you?) and comes in to clean house again, sending Sid and Steiner running away and leaving Page to get big booted and legdropped for the pin. The ending was odd as Hogan seemed to get up at two and a half while Goldberg and Sting just stood there with nothing to do.

Rating: D-. And now I'm supposed to pay for Goldberg vs. Page this Sunday? He's become the main event whipping boy in the last few weeks, but at least it's better than having the young guys doing these jobs. Not that they would ever be allowed near Hogan, Goldberg and Sting of course. This was another massacre with Hogan and Goldberg barely breaking a sweat before Sting came down to take away any possible threat. The main event heels are looking so worthless right now that having any two parts of the holy trinity fighting each other is the only real option they have.

Luger gets in the ring and right into Sting's face, saying Hogan can't be trusted. Sting and Luger start fighting as the show goes off the air.

Overall Rating: F-. There have been books written about what killed WCW. You'll hear reasons ranging from the AOL-Time Warner merger to guaranteed contracts to a lack of elevating new stars. I however offer a new theory: their shows SUCKED. Look at what they presented here tonight and tell me how they were trying to put out a good product. I for one don't really need to see Jerry Flynn and Kendall Windham working twice in a night but that's just me.

What on here would make me want to come back? Is it the boring to

horrible matches? Maybe the young guys getting crushed? Or is it the Clowns coming out three times a show? It could be sitting through three terrible matches and one passable one to find out that the entire concept was just there for Sid to beat up more young, talented guys. This show drew a 4.1 rating compared to Raw's 4.4. Next week's ratings: 6.0 for Raw compared to a 3.3 for Nitro. This show didn't make people stick around and how can you blame them? Total disaster here and it was clear they weren't even trying.

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